[36] Eastern group, dialect a1: oaklétosu (a1); yalíere (b1); yaliririte (c).

621 [161] This group, comprising 23 persons divided into six families, was found in the region of the Papagaio River (Utiarity) upon the occasion of one of its excursions in the nomad period. As we learned later, it was part of quite an important Indian community localized in several villages or camp sites in an unexplored zone of the right bank of the Juruena River, where we went, traveled and lived with them. The dry season and the period of nomadism does not seem to have been the only reason for the isolation of the group; some differences re- [22] lating to command had seemingly provoked a break, grouping a certain number of individuals around an active and ambitious chief. We have, undoubtedly, been called on to play a semi-conscious role in this fight. We shall return to this point when we treat of command. However, the encounters of the group with other bands belonging to the same community have always been cordial. The meeting with a first band approximately restored the population of the winter vil- [161] lage; and the strength of a neighboring village, found later on, increased the number to 75 persons, the largest number of Indians that we saw united in eight months.

As will be seen by the geneological chart opposite, the restricted group is composed of four generations, the oldest reduced to two individuals, the following being composed of "husbands" and "wives," "brothers," "sisters," "brothers-in-law" and "sisters-in-law." The third and the fourth, finally, constitute a complex mixture of children, sometimes at an early age, considered as "children" or "relatives," and of adults classed as "brothers," "sisters," "husbands," and "wives," and shifted to a generation younger than their normal one because of their situation as children of older brothers.

Before giving several quick pieces of information about each of the members of the group from the point of view of his situation in the kinship system and of his individual psychology, it is necessary to stop for a moment at the question of proper names.

• • • •

551 Proper names are never pronounced among the Nambikwara. A very strict prohibition forbids them and raises a nearly insoluble problem for the notation of genealogies, even though the taboo does not seem to be as rigorous for the dead as for the living. Nevertheless, one [37] never hears a proper name, and individuals call one another

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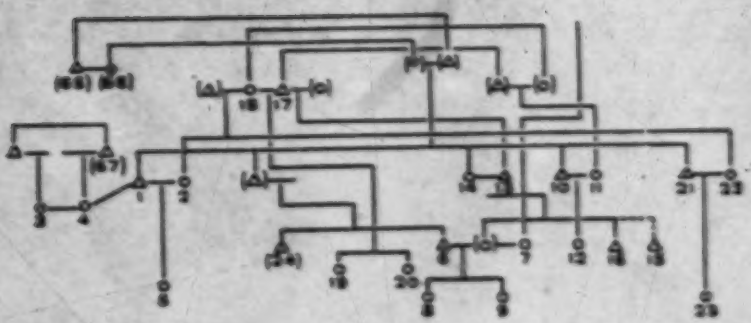

Fig. 11.
Genealogical composition of group a1.

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115
157 A1. --The chief of the group. He is a man of about 35 years, married to three women: a2, by whom he has a daughter a5, and a3 and a4, both daughters of "sister," without child.

A1 is remarkably intelligent, conscious of his responsibilities, active, enterprising and ingenious. When we went to visit his village, he did not hesitate to follow a new itinerary, unknown to him, because our horses could not pass along the habitual path. And when we arrived at the village, we found the stakes necessary to tie our oxen and horses, which he had had set up by a party sent a few hours ahead of time.

His attitude concerning writing is very revealing. He immediately understood his role of signing (1), and the social superiority which it

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1. The Nambikwara of group a are completely ignorant of drawing, if one excepts a few geometric tracings on gourds. For several days they did not know what to do with the paper and pencils which we distributed to them. A little later, we saw them deeply engrossed in tracing wavy lines. In doing this they were imitating the only use which they had seen us make of our note pads, that is, for writing, but without understanding the purpose and significance.

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Besides, they called the act of writing: iekarinkedinru (a1), that is "make lines," which for them had an esthetic interest:

(3) Kihikagnere mu'iene (b1).
It is nice to make lines.

[77]

The drawings reproduced in Figure 19 thus constitute a cultural innovation inspired by our own drawings.

622 confers; also [41] he asked us for a note pad and a pencil, and we
115 are likewise equipped when we travel together. He does not com-
157 municate to me verbally the information that I ask of him, but traces on his paper some wavy lines and presents them to me as though I should read his response. But he himself is half duped by his comedy. Each time that his hand finishes a line, he examines it anxiously, as if the significance should miraculously spring forth, and each time, the same chagrined disillusion is painted on his face. But he doesn't give in. And it is silently understood between us that his scrawl possesses a meaning which I pretend to understand. Naturally, the verbal commentary follows almost immediately, and excuses me from having to demand some very necessary clarifications. When we discuss command, we shall return to certain aspects of this semi-mystification.

He is a valuable informant who understands the problems, perceives the difficulties, and is interested in the work; but his functions absorb him often, and he disappears for whole days on a hunting expedition, a survey of itinerary or a localization of ripe seed or fruit trees. On the other hand, his wives often call him to tender love games in which he lets himself be voluntarily involved.

In a general way, his attitude shows a logic, a continuity of purpose, very exceptional among the Nambikwara who are often unstable and temperamental. Placed in other conditions and with other means at his disposal, he might be a valuable organizer. And he is, after all, alone responsible for the destinies of his group, which he conducts with competence, although in a sometimes utopian spirit.

The father and the mother of A1 are dead. But his father's brother and mother's sister, whom he calls ahy'hosu and ay'hitsou live in the same village (A65 and a66).

115 a2. --About 30 to 35 years. The eldest of the wives of A1, mother of a5, daughter of a18 and a now dead father. She is serious industrious, a little reserved in social relations. In the triple household

621 comment later (1) on the complex motives that might have induced

1. Cf. p. 77.

[497] these two bands, speaking different dialects and who were not even capable of understanding one another without an interpreter, to practically merge. It seems that group b1 was composed of the rare survivors of a formerly important formation now disappeared, living previously in two distinct groups, around the sources of the eastern tributaries of the Roosevelt River. We have already tried to calculate these losses, resulting from recent epidemics (2). Group c had,

2. Cf. above, p. 6.

[578] without doubt, gone through the same hardships. Moreover, its position had been compromised by antagonisms with other bands rising from the same dialect, and who had formerly been their allies. A visit, with a commercial goal, of related Indians originally from the south (members of the group known by the name of Kabixi) must have raised the forces of group b1 to 21 persons for 621 several days. Here is its composition at this moment:

115 157 622 601 Fire 1 (1 to 7). --The family of the chief of the band. The chief, B1, is 30 to 35 years old, and one of the most intelligent Indians whom it was our privilege to encounter. But he is intelligent in a way very different from A1. The latter is prudent and very resourceful, always meditating some political combination. On the contrary, B1 is not a man of action, but rather contemplative, with a charming and poetic spirit, and rich sensibilities. He is fully conscious of the inevitable decadence of his people, and this conviction often shades his words with a subtle tint of melancholy:

(4) ĺoⁿndiuⁿẽ ; oⁿhaĺne hẽñi niho ⁿmẽdeuⁿẽn. (b1)

"I also did the same thing, now it is finished," [51] he says, remembering happier days when his group, far from being reduced to a handful of individuals incapable of keeping alive their traditional customs, was comprised of several hundreds of participants faithful to all the manifestations of the Nambikwara culture. His curiosity toward our customs and towards those which we had been able to observe in other tribes is just as great as ours. With him, ethnographic work is never unilateral. He conceives of it only as an exchange of information, and what we bring him is always very welcome. Often [77] he even asks us for--and preserves carefully--drawings representing

621 feather ornaments, hair styles, arms, such as we have seen among
115 neighboring or faraway peoples. Did he entertain the hope of per-
157 fecting the material and intellectual equipment of his group thanks
● 622 to this information? It is possible, even though his dreamy tempera-
177 ment hardly ever drives him to realizations. However, one day when
601 we were interrogating him concerning the Pan pipes, to verify the
area of diffusion of that instrument, he answered that he had never
537 seen any, but that he would like to have a drawing (different from
539 group a, group b does not have real pipes of Pan, but instruments
made of two or three tubes of equal length and giving approximately
the same note, tied together with cotton thread and wax). With the
aid of our sketch he succeeded in making a crude but usable instru-
ment.

621 B1 had two wives: b2, about 25 years, mother of two little
601 girls of 5 to 7 years, b4 and b5; and b3, older than he (about 40
years old), mother of a boy of 7 years, B6, and of a girl of 9 years,
b7.

Fire 2 (8 and 9). --A son of a deceased brother of B1, whom the
latter then calls "son" (about 25 years old), and his wife about 18,
sister of B13; no information about the father and mother.

Fire 3 (10 to 12). --B10 is a brother of B8, and B1 calls him "son"
also. His wife, b11, of undetermined parentage, is about 20 years
old, and his daughter b12 about 6.

Fire 4 (13 and 14). --This household presents the only sure case of
oblique marriage in group b1. B13, about 25 years, married a girl
of 16 or 17, b14, daughter of a dead son of the dead brother of B1;
he calls her then, as seen before, tasuite.

Fire 5 (15 to 17). --These three individuals are the last survivors
of a related group destroyed by an epidemic. After the disaster,
they joined the band of B1. B15, about 35 years, is the brother of
b2, thus tarute of B1. His wife, the same age, b16, is a sister of B1,
thus ndedere of b2. Their son, B17, is about 5. The daughters of
B1 call him (B17) "husband," and he calls them "wives."

621 [52] The visitors. --They came from the region lying between
579 the sources of the tributaries of the left bank of the Juruena and of
601 those of the right bank of the Guaporé. All were related to their
hosts, and were distributed among three generations. The oldest was
comprised of three individuals: B18, about 50 years old, father of
B21, B25, B27, and B29; his wife b19, the same age, paternal aunt
of B1; and the brother of the wife, B20, 40 years. Besides the
children of B18 already mentioned (from 20 to 30 years old), the next

1: Lévi-Strauss--100 E-5 (1938-1939)1948 SP17 Nambicuara SP17

122 Each band recognizes the leadership of a chief (ẽlhetu, a1/2; ẽlikãde, b1/2; ẽlikãpara, c). He commands the group, or more exactly the group of adult men who are his "companions" (nukẽnẽlore, b1/2). These see to it that the orders are carried out by their wives, who are rarely consulted. The women conform to the decisions of the men, but they do not, in the collective plane, execute them directly. They take part in this only inside their family group, within the limits of sexual division of labor such as we have previously described it. The tasks of the chief are diverse. The principal and most permanent consist of the administration of the group. It is the chief who decides the seasonal occupations at the beginning of the nomadic period,

27. ẽlikãkwanaiene ẽjnaaenaẽ (b1)
the chief commands: everybody on their way!

the moment and place where they will camp for the rains, the gardening work and choice of plantations, the construction of huts, the itineraries of trips and times of stopping, hunting expeditions, gathering or collecting trips, the conduct to be observed as regards neighboring groups. His role is generally summed up by the formula:

28. ẽlikã nãẽna ẽenate (b1)
the chief walks ahead. (1)

1. Thus, the philosophy of power does not seem to have been modified among the Brazilian Indians since the far-away day when, upon the occasion of an encounter made at Rouen, Montaigne made this statement: "Concerning what I asked him as to the fruits which he received from the superiority which he enjoyed among his people (for he was a Capitan and we sailors named him King), he told me that it was to be the first to march to war..." (Essais, éd. de la Pléiade, Paris, 1939, Ch. 31 "Des Cannibales").

123 He also goes away much more frequently than his companions, for one or more days, accompanied by one or two of his polygamous wives who assist him in his enterprises, (2) with the purpose of

2. See above, p. 60 f.

discovering grains or fruits, [87] groves of piquy (a type of fir), of caju (Anacardium sylvestre), the heads of streams frequented by small game, where to lead his group, always searching for means of subsistence. His role is also that of maintaining internal discipline and of opposing the bad intentions of recalcitrants:

29. odnanjenuatonje hutonto igalagatiene (b1)
Lazy one, I order you, that is enough, to work!

The only sanction at his disposition is that of obtaining the agreement of his companions to expell one who has become guilty of a fault (1) or who shows himself to be rebellious to collective life.

1. Cf. below, p. 111.

But that is only possible in the case where a single member of the group shows lack of discipline. The chief should show a continual talent which is more closely related to electoral politics than to the exercise of power, to maintain his group, and if possible, to enlarge it by new adherents. The nomadic band in fact represents a fragile unit. If the authority of the chief becomes too demanding, if he monopolizes too great a number of women, if he is not capable in periods of need of resolving the food problems, discontent is created, individuals or families break away, and go to attach themselves to a related band whose affairs seem to be better conducted--better nourished thanks to the discovery of a hunting or collecting site, or richer because of barter with neighboring groups, or more powerful after victorious wars. The chief then finds himself at the head of a too restricted group, incapable of facing daily difficulties, or whose women are exposed to being carried off by stronger neighbors, and he is obliged to renounce his command in order to join a more happy faction with his faithful followers; the Nambikwara society is thus in a state of perpetual flux. Groups form, are broken up, grow and disappear and, in several months' time sometimes the composition, number and division of bands become unrecognizable. All of these transformations are accompanied by intrigues and conflicts, by rises and falls, the whole being produced at an extremely rapid rhythm.

In exchange for the authority which they recognize in him, his companions are very demanding in regard to their chief; and if a decision made by him places the group in some difficulty, he is left alone to find means of surmounting it. We remember a trip undertaken by mutual consent, rendered more difficult than had been thought by the necessity of discovering a new itinerary along which our mules

and oxen for carrying could pass. The provisions of manioc proved to be insufficient and one morning the little band found itself without anything to eat. Our own attempts to kill some animal were in vain, and the worst [88] bad humor began to reign, the chief of the group being obviously held responsible for an affair which we, he and I, had contrived. In place of undertaking a hunting or collecting expedition, each one decided to go to sleep in the shade of shelters, and they left the chief alone to find the solution to the problem. He disappeared, accompanied by one of his wives (his first wife a2, contrary to usual procedure; but a3 and a4 shared the general irritation) and toward evening both were seen reappearing, their heavy baskets filled with grasshoppers which they had spent the entire day catching. Although grasshopper pie is not a particularly esteemed dish, everyone ate with good appetite and found his good humor again. They took up the journey again the next morning.

But other things than these exceptional relief measures are expected of the chief. He must sing and dance willingly and well, and be capable of animating the collective life. He must organize the work in the most reasonable way in order to eliminate useless fatigue and effort. Thus on the eve of a departure, B1 recites for us his order of march:

30. mãdõtrige mãdohõdhudne hajtehãdige nãnjehnile
gietmonõnahara jãnehara kanahanĩ'ndeere hinkõnaha
iinãmnje ãkeema iinamnje ihikoro ihikoro. (b1)
When it is hot, one is tired, one is hungry, the
children walk badly; when one marches at dawn,
one marches well, at dawn, one should march, change
routes, march; on the way! on the way!

He must also win over his companions by numerous gifts. According to B1, who gives in willingly to the servitude of power, generosity plays a fundamental role in determining the degree of popularity which the new chief will enjoy, and the companions indulge in all sorts of speculations:

31. gilikã abẽni ãnire tunun?ãtutnagilikã agnãhare
nnãtjani (b-1)
The chief is leaving; the one who will come will give me
a great deal.--"Chief! Be generous! Give to me!"

The presents thus anticipated consist of food or objects which the chief will have made himself with the assistance of his polygamous wives, or that he will have procured by good exchanges with neighboring bands, or which might come from war booty. Often, it seems,

622 he is incapable of satisfying increasing demands, and must refuse firmly:

32. Mĩnde hõta agnãre Hõta (bl)
The giving is finished! Being generous is finished!

[89] or must even pose the question of confidence:

33. dahĩ'ri (gi) dajẽ tununadjẽ tundnẽnetine hãnerejane (bl)
Go away! Giving is done with! Let another be generous (in my place)!

622 However it evidently depends on his ability and moderation whether
648 or not these refusals keep the demands of his companions within reasonable limits or provoke discontent and resulting ruptures. Under these conditions, the relationships which the chief succeeds in cementing with the outside world--other Nambikwara bands and neighboring tribes--have extreme importance. The chief has traveled widely. Within the limits of his territory, he has visited tribes different from his own and which his companions know only through his commentaries. We ourselves have had the impression of being used for political purposes: we have told above what the reactions of Al were as regards writing. (1) He wished on this basis to attempt a vast operation, and

1. See above, p. 40 f.

he united several related bands under the pretext of meeting us, begging us without explanation to postpone the exchange of objects with the Indians. This enigmatic attitude lasted till the day when, assembling all his guests in a circle, he exhibited a piece of paper covered with wavy lines, and made a pretense of reading to each individual the nature and importance of the present which I was supposed to give to each one. All this with my complicity, obviously stupefied and immediately acquired. The Indians were even more impressed. The plan, such as we were able to understand it, consisted of fortifying his power by presenting himself as the sponsor and protector of the white visitor, whose secrets he was reputed to know at the same time. But the card of civilization thus played is assuredly vain. Six months later, we found Al at the head of a severely reduced group and without illusion as to the failure of his vast projects. He watched us leave with real sadness, as though he were losing, with us, the last vestige of his prestige.

622 The charges of leadership being presented under such unattractive colors, one might ask what makes an individual accept them. It was not possible for us to determine exactly what the modalities are to be

(22 named chief. One single point is clear: his functions are not hereditary. When the acting chief falls ill or becomes too old to carry on his charge, he points out from among the members of the group the one who will be his successor, doubtless influenced in his choice by collective opinion. He makes the decision public by the formula: hẽ̃ gilikãde (b1): "this one will be chief," and thus the continuity of power is assured:

34. gilikaa dɛterige tʃahʔliki'herage niaare gilikãde (b1)
When the chief dies, another chief comes in his place.

[90] But it happens that the person in question caring little for the heavy responsibilities which await him, declines the honor which has just been done him:

35. tʃnjane tʃngilikã ʔilikãdnere (b1)
I do not wish to take the place of the chief.

and it is necessary to proceed to a new choice. What are then the motives which might determine the acceptance? Sexual preoccupations certainly play a role. If the newly elected is young, in place of going through a long period of celibacy or of being forced to marry an old woman, he will find himself in the privileged position of having several companions. If he is already married, he can add to his wife the youngest and prettiest among the available women of the group, or among those who will be conquered in war, and eventually obtain those whom he would desire and who would be already married.

C20, having lost his wives through illness or for some other reason, found himself a bachelor. He then took his young wife (c21) [90] from another husband, under the pretext that the latter was "too young to have a wife." Undoubtedly his liking of responsibility must equally be taken into consideration, his sense of leadership, ambition, and his desire for a fuller existence than that of normal life. The only two chiefs with whom we had any real personal contacts (A1 and B1) were both individuals of particularly lively spirit and, in giving to the term the sense which it might possess in these societies, more cultivated than their companions. (1)

1. The Indian theory of command has been the object of a more detailed study: C. Lévi-Strauss, Chief and chieftainship among a primitive tribe: The Nambikwara of Northwestern Mato Grosso. Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1944.

1: Lévi-Strauss--105 E-6 (1938-1949)1948 SP17 Nambicuara SP17

622 The command carries, moreover, a certain number of fixed offices. It is the chief who makes the poison for arrows; and he presides over ceremonies of initiation, of marriage or burial, concerning which we shall speak later. He organizes chants and dances, festivals both when they assume a ritual character, and when they have as a goal purely secular distraction. It is he who organizes 622 ball games. The ball game is widespread in western and northern 526 Mato Grosso, for it is found from the Paressi to the tribes of the Lower Guaporé. Among the latter people we have been able to gather evidences of its sociological significance. It is perhaps the same among the Nambikwara; but, at least during the period of nomadic life, the ball game is practiced with a purely recreational goal in mind. The teams are built up haphazardly from those present and upon the spur of the moment, and the game takes place in a spirit of complete improvisation.

WAR AND TRADE

648 The two subjects should be treated simultaneously, commercial 609 exchanges usually representing potential wars peacefully re-[91] 439 solved, and the wars, the outcome of unhappy transactions. Among the numerous bands which cross through the bush during the dry season, it is necessary to distinguish those who are related by family ties, and who often represent the population of a winter village—or of a group of villages—which has "burst forth" in the pursuit of the nomadic life. Among themselves these bands entertain relationships which are normally pacific, although not necessarily so. On the contrary, bands which are strangers to one another, composed of members not related among themselves and whose geographic location is far distant, or who are even separated by differences of language, mistrust one another at the same time that they feel themselves necessary to one another. Only when they meet can they procure desirable articles which only one of them is capable of obtaining or of making. These articles seemed to us to belong essentially to three categories: first of all women, whom only victorious expeditions are permitted to carry off. Next seeds, notably bean seeds, and finally ceramics, or [285] even fragments of pottery used to make the weights of spindles. Group [94] a1 whose cultural level is clearly inferior (especially in its ignorance concerning pottery) to that of its western and southern neighbors, according to the word of its chief, had carried on several campaigns during the last few years with the goal of procuring these two last articles.

collectively obliged to make reprisals for an injury done one of its members. Much more often, given the very lively and permanent animosity which reigns between the groups, these pretexts good for exciting the spirit are voluntarily entertained, especially if they feel strong either because of the importance of the group's strength or because of an alliance with neighboring bands against a common enemy, concluded by the intermediary of messengers acting as ambassadors. The proposition of war is presented by an exalted individual or one who exposes before his companions his particular griefs, in the same tone and style that speeches were made at the encounter.

39. ẽ̃ akinãẽ̃ ẽ̃dnãẽ̃ gõdegãẽ̃ kakoũẽ̃ ordnẽ̃ galagrĩẽ̃ẽ̃ (b1) whose approximate sense is: "Hello! Come here! Let's go! I am irritated! very irritated! arrows! big arrows!" The Indians become so excited upon the occasion of these epic speeches that it is not possible to obtain the commentary of the formula except well after they have been cited and undoubtedly very unfaithfully. But war is not a matter of purely profane decision. It necessitates a preliminary ceremony which will determine if the signs are favorable or not. Dressed in special attire, tufts of buriti straw dappled with red, hoods of jaguar skin, the men assemble under the leadership of the chief and execute the special dance and chant of war. (1) A divining rite

1. Dances and music will be the object of a special publication.

is then performed. The chief, or the sorcerer in the groups where he exists, goes solemnly to hide an arrow in a corner of the bush. The arrow is retrieved the next day. If it is covered with blood, the expedition is undertaken, if not, it is given up. (2) Many warlike

2. This symbolic use of an arrow seems typical of cultures situated north of the Amazon. The fact is interesting, given the northern affinities of the Nambikwara language. Concerning the use of the arrow as the message of war, cf. Roth, "An inquiry," etc., Annual report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 30, p. 362; Koch-Grünberg, Zwei Jahre unter den Indianern, etc., Berlin, 1910, Vol. II, p. 316; Gumilla, Historia Natural del Rio Orinoco, Barcelona, 1791, Vol. I, p. 134.

expeditions thus begun end after several kilometers of marching.

he was completely naked, that is, divested of his
756 necklaces, bracelets, earrings, and belt, and by the light of our
[301] electric lamps we could make out his tragic expression and his pale complexion. He let himself be helped to the camp without difficulty, where he sat down without a word and in a completely impressive attitude of dejection. Little by little, his story was drawn from him by an anxious listener. He explained that he had been carried off by the thunder (am?), [a storm had broken the same day]; the thunder had carried him in the air to a point which he designated at a distance of 25 kilometers from the camp (Ananás River), had divested him of all his ornaments, then brought him back the same way and left him in the place where we had discovered him exhausted. Everyone went to sleep commenting on the incident and the next morning, C20 had recovered not only his habitual good humor, but also all his ornaments, which amazed no one and for which he offered no explanation. But the following days a very different version of the event began to be peddled by the Tarindé. They said that, far from having entered into relationship with the other world, C20, under the cover of a magical disappearance, had gone to undertake
[678] some transactions with a band of Sabané Indians who were camping in the vicinity. These insinuations were never developed further, and the official version of the affair continued to be ostensibly admitted. However, in our personal relationships, B1 let his preoccupations be seen upon several occasions. As the two groups left us shortly after, we never found out the outcome of the story.

756 No information has been uncovered concerning the manner of
279 naming the shaman as such. In the preparation of the arrow poison, C20 was assisted by his potential son-in-law C25.

* * * * * *

622 [104] Besides his supernatural attributes, the chief, or shaman,
756 plays another role, that of "leader" in ceremonies and celebrations.
796 The Nambikwara have three types of ceremonies. Those which mark the critical moments of each one's existence, such as birth, initiation, puberty, marriage, death; the seasonal festivals; and finally, the ceremonies celebrated on exceptional occasions: war and hunting or scavenging expeditions. We have already alluded to the rites of war, and we shall speak farther on of the ceremonies of the first type. We shall limit ourselves here then to some brief observations concerning the others.

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

string (secondary release). Four types of arrows are used: (1) featherless fishing arrow with three to five prongs; (2) bird arrow with a blunt point; (3) big-game arrow with a lanceolate bamboo point; and (4) poisoned arrow, used chiefly for hunting monkeys, with several barbs which are attached to the point with cotton wrapping and which break easily in the wound, being, therefore, usually protected by a bamboo sheath. The last three have a bamboo shaft and "Arara" feathering. Sewed feathering is known by the central and northern groups but seldom used. For warfare, big game arrows with serrated bamboo points are used.

Nambicuara arrow poison is a curare prepared by grating the root of a *Strychnos* shrub, and by infusing (*Eastern Nambicuara*) or boiling (*Central* and *Northern Nambicuara*) it until the water evaporates and leaves a thick brownish substance, which is smeared on a wax-coated arrow point. It can be preserved in tiny pots for several months. Among South American arrow poisons, it is remarkable because it is made of only one vegetable substance and is prepared openly—in some groups by the chief or shaman, in other groups by anyone—without magical practices or taboos. Its great toxic properties were studied by Vellard (1939 b).

Other poisons of unknown composition are used for amorous or political revenge. They are in the form of powders and are kept in tubes made of feather quills, bamboo, or other woods, each ornamented with paintings and cotton or bark wrappings.

Clubs are carved in the shape of a flattened or cylindrical pointed spade; the handle is often adorned with black and white plaiting of philodendron bark and bamboo strips. Their purpose is mostly ceremonial.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Kinship terms identify parallel-cousins with siblings, and cross-cousins with potential or actual spouses. Cross-uncles and cross-aunts are called by the same terms as parents-in-law and grandparents; parallel-uncles and parallel-aunts are equated with parents. Similarly, parallel-nephews and parallel-nieces are classed with children, and cross-nephews and cross-nieces with children-in-law. Marriage is between cross-cousins or between the maternal uncle and his niece. Monogamy is the rule, but polygyny is the privilege of the chief and other important men. Polygyny is usually with several sisters (sororal) or with a woman and her daughters by a former union. The first wife runs the household, subsequent wives being assistants to the husband. The deficiency of available women which results from polygyny is compensated by homosexuality between adolescent male cross-cousins (Lévi-Strauss, 1943 a).

The village is ruled by a chief, but each of the nomadic bands into which it splits during the dry season is led by a secondary chief. Chief-

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
SP17 Nambicuára SP17

tainship is not hereditary; the chief, when old or sick, designates his successor from the ablest men of the group. The chief's authority is slight; it depends wholly on the good will of the family heads. 622

Relations between neighboring bands are inspired both by fear and by the desire to exchange goods. Warfare, therefore, is closely connected with barter. Groups not acquainted with each other use ritual speech when they meet. 619 438

Before starting a war expedition, a divinatory rite is performed with special songs and dances. An arrow is hidden by the shaman, the outcome of the expedition being presaged by its appearance the following day. 721 787

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—After the delivery of a child, the placenta is buried in the bush and both parents are subjected to rigid prohibitions concerning food, the use of ornaments, and social contacts. 844

Puberty.—The initiation rite for young men consists of piercing their lips and nose and giving them their adult personal name. At her first menstruation, a girl is isolated for several months in a special shelter outside the village, where she is given ritual food by her mother. At the end of the rite, she takes a long bath in the river; this also constitutes the first step of the marriage ceremony. 881 [304]

Both cross-cousin and avuncular marriages (see p. 367), are often planned by parents for their infant children. Marriage is celebrated by festivals, banquets, and dances. The union is pronounced by the chief. Fish and fishing are important both before and during the ceremony. 584 585

Separation is frequent, the chief cause being that the man seeks a younger and prettier woman. There is no social sanction of adultery, except that the seducer is advised by his companion to go away for a while so as to avoid the husband's revenge. A murderer also flees vengeance. 586 684 682

Death.—Some groups of *Nambicuara* bury their dead in a circular pit, the corpse being placed in a crouching position. Others leave the corpse to decompose in an elongated ditch and later wash the bones in the river, put them in a basket, and bury them in the village, which is then abandoned. Weapons, implements, adornments, and other property of the deceased are destroyed, but his garden—if he owned one—is abandoned only for a few months. Later anybody may cultivate it. 764

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Art.—Most *Nambicuara* groups are completely ignorant of drawing, although some groups decorate calabashes with dots and straight and sinuous lines. These are conventionalized reproductions of realistic designs found among other groups. 531

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

relationship from becoming really operative in the constitution of the band. It can be said that, inside the band as well as between the different bands which are the offspring of the same temporary village, everybody is everybody's kin, in pretty much the same fashion.

Why then the splitting-up process? Two different considerations must be brought forth to answer this question. From an economic point of view, the scarcity of wild food resources and the subsequent high square-mileage needed to feed one individual during the nomadic period make the division into small bands almost compulsory. The real question is not why there is subdivision but rather on what basis it takes place. I have said that this is done by free choice, but this freedom is not arbitrary. There are, in the initial group, several men acknowledged as leaders (who likely acquired this reputation from their behavior during the nomadic life) and who make the relatively stable nuclei around which the different aggregates center. The importance, as well as the permanence of the aggregate through successive years, depend largely upon the ability of each of these leaders to keep his rank and eventually to improve it. Thus, it may be said that leadership does not exist as a result of the band's needs, but, instead, that the band receives its shape, its size, and even its origin, from the potential leader who antedates it.

There is, however, a continuous function of leadership, although not permanently assumed by the same individual. Among the Nambicuara, chieftainship is not hereditary. When a chief grows old, or is taken ill, and when he does not feel able to fulfill his heavy duty any more, he himself designates his successor. "This one—this one will be the chief . . ." he says. It seems likely that this autocratic power to insure one's own succession is more apparent than real. We shall emphasize later on the small amount of authority enjoyed by the chief and, in this case as in many others, the final decision is probably preceded by a careful survey of public opinion, the designated heir being, at the same time, the one with the greater support from the members of the band. The appointment of the new chief is not only limited by the wishes or disapproval of the band; it needs also to correspond to the plans of the individual to be chosen. Not seldom, does the offer of leadership meet with a vehement refusal: "I don't want to be the chief." Then a new choice must be made. As a matter of fact, chieftainship does not seem to be coveted by many people, and the general attitude of the different chiefs I happened to know was less to brag about their

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

622 importance and authority than to complain of their many duties and heavy responsibilities. What, then, are the privileges of the chief, and what are his obligations?

When, about 1560, the great French moralist of the sixteenth century, Montaigne, met in Rouen with three Brazilian Indians brought there by some navigator, he asked one of them what were the privileges of the chief (Montaigne said, "the King") in his country; and the native, himself a chief, answered: "To walk ahead on the warpath." Montaigne related this story in a famous chapter of the *Essays* where he wondered a great deal about this proud definition*; but it was a greater wonder to me when, almost four centuries later, putting the same question to my informants I was given the same answer. Civilised countries are certainly not accustomed to such constancy in the field of political philosophy! Striking as it may be, this answer is less significant than the name by which the chief is designated in the Nambikuara language. *Uilikande*, the native word for chief, seems to mean "the one who unites" or "the one who joins together." This etymology suggests that the native mind is fully conscious of this extremely important phenomenon which I have pointed out from the beginning, namely, that the leader appears as the cause of the group's willingness to aggregate rather than as the result of the need for a central authority felt by a group already constituted.

Personal prestige and the ability to inspire confidence are thus the foundations of leadership in Nambikuara society. As a matter of fact, both are necessary in the man who will become the guide of this adventurous experiment: the nomadic life of the dry season. For six or seven months, the chief will be entirely responsible for the management of his band. It is he who orders the start of the wandering period, selects the routes, chooses the stopping points and the duration of the stay at each of them, whether a few days or several weeks. He also orders and organizes the hunting, fishing, collecting and gathering expeditions, and determines the conduct of the band in relation to neighboring groups. When the band's chief is, at the same time, a village chief (taking the word village with the restricted meaning of semi-permanent dwelling for the rainy season), his duties do not stop there. He will determine the moment when, and the place where, the group will settle; he will also direct the gardening and decide what plants

* Michel de Montaigne. "Des Cannibales." Essais. Livre I, XXXI (End of the chapter).

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

are to be cultivated; and, generally speaking, he will organize the occupations according to the seasons' needs and possibilities. 622

These rather versatile duties, it should be pointed out from the start, are not facilitated by any fixed power or recognized authority. Consent is at the origin of leadership, and consent, too, furnishes the only measure of its legitimacy. Disorderly conduct (according to the native standards) and unwillingness to work on the part of one or two discontented individuals may seriously jeopardize the chief's program and the welfare of his small group. In this eventuality, however, the chief has no coercivitive power at his disposal. The eviction of the bad people can take place only in so far as the chief is able to make public feeling coincide with his own opinion. Thus, he must continuously display a skill belonging more to the politician trying to keep hold of his fluctuating majority than to an over-powering ruler. Furthermore, he does not only need to keep his group together. Although the band lives practically alone and by itself during the nomadic period, the existence of the other bands is not forgotten. It is not enough to do well; the chief must try—and his people count on him for that—to do better than the others. [627]

No social structure is weaker and more fragile than the Nambikuara band. If the chief's authority appears too exacting, if he keeps too many women for himself (I shall later analyse the special features of the chief's polygamy), or if he does not satisfactorily solve the food problem in times of scarcity, discontent will very likely appear. Then, individuals, or families, will separate from the group and join another band believed to be better managed. For instance, this band may get better fare from the discovery of new hunting or gathering emplacements; or it may have become richer in ornaments or implements, through trade with neighboring groups, or more powerful as a result of a successful war expedition. The day will come when the chief finds himself heading a group too small to face the problems of daily life, and to protect his women from the covetousness of other bands. In such cases, he will have no alternative but to give up his command and to rally, together with his last followers, a happier faction. Therefore, Nambikuara social structure appears continuously on the move. The bands take shape, then disorganize, they increase and they vanish. Within a few months, sometimes, their composition, number and distribution cannot be recognized. Political intrigues within the same band and conflicts between bands impose their rhythm upon these fluc- 621 622

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

[521] tutions, and the ascent or decline of individuals and groups follow
522 each other in a rather surprising manner.

How will the chief be able to overcome these difficulties? The first instrumental force of his power lies in his generosity. Generosity —an all important feature of chieftainship among most primitive peoples, especially in America—plays an outstanding part even on those crude cultural levels where worldly goods are limited to the most primitive weapons and tools, coarse ornaments made of feathers, shells and bones, and raw materials, such as lumps of rosin and wax, hanks of fiber and splinters of bamboo for arrow-making. There cannot be great economic distinctions between families each of which can pack [462] all of its belongings in the baskets carried along by the women during [558] the long travels of the dry season. But, although the chief does not seem to fare better, in this respect, than the others, he must always have at hand surpluses of food, tools, weapons, ornaments which, while being small indeed, acquire great value because of the scarcity which is the prevalent condition. When an individual, a family or the band itself needs or covets something, the chief is called upon to secure the desired article. Generosity is the quality, much speculated on, which is expected of a new chief. Generosity is the string constantly struck which makes the general consent to one's leadership sound clear or out of tune. There is little doubt that, in this respect, the chief's ability to give is exploited to the utmost. Band chiefs used to be my best informants, and, well aware of their difficult position, I liked to reward them liberally; but I seldom saw one of my many gifts remain in their hands for more than a few days. Each time I took leave of a band, after a few weeks or a few months, its members had time to become the happy hoarders of axes, knives, beads, and so on. As a rule, however, the chief was exactly as poor as at my first arrival. Everything he had received from me (and this was considerably more than the average) had already been squeezed out of him. This collective greediness not seldom drives the chief to an almost desperate position; then the refusal to give plays about the same part, in this primitive democracy, as the threat to resign followed by a vote of confidence in a modern parliament. When a chief reaches the point where he must say: "To give away is over! To be generous is over! Let another be generous in my place!", he must, indeed, be sure of his power and prestige, for his rule is undergoing its severest crisis.

Ingenuity is but the intellectual form of generosity. A great deal

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

of skill and initiative are the prerequisites of a good leader. It is he who makes the arrow-poison, although the preparation of *curare* among the Nambikuara is a purely profane activity surrounded by no ceremonial taboos or magic prescriptions. It is he, also, who makes the rubber ball used in the head-ball games which are played occasionally. The chief must be a good singer and dancer, a merrymaker always ready to cheer up the band and to brighten the dullness of daily life. This could easily lead to shamanism; and, in some cases, I have met with chiefs who were at the same time healers and trance addicts. Mystical life, however, is kept in the background among the Nambikuara, and, wherever they exist, magical functions are only secondary attributes of the leader. More often chieftainship and sorcery are divided between two different individuals. In this respect, there is a strong difference between the Nambikuara and their northwestern neighbors the Tupi-Kawahib among whom the chief is, first of all, a shaman, usually a psychotic addicted to dreams, visions, trances and impersonations.

But although they are oriented in a more positive direction, the Nambikuara chief's skill and ingenuity are none the less amazing. He must have a perfect knowledge of the territories haunted by his and other groups, be familiar with the hunting grounds, the location of fruit-bearing trees and the time of their ripening, have some idea of the itineraries followed by other bands, whether hostile or friendly. Therefore, he must travel more, and more quickly, than his people, have a good memory, and sometimes gamble his prestige on hazardous contacts with foreign and dangerous people. He is constantly engaged in some task of reconnoitering and exploring, and seems to flutter around his band rather than lead it.

Except for one or two men without actual power, but eager to cooperate and to receive occasional rewards, the passivity of the band makes a strong contrast with its dynamic leader. It seems as if the band, having relinquished certain advantages to the chief, were in exchange relying entirely upon him for its interests and safety. I received a particularly striking demonstration of this under rather strange circumstances. After several weeks' discussion, I had obtained from a chief the favor of taking me, together with a few companions and some animals loaded with presents, to the semi-permanent dwellings of his band which were uninhabited at that time. This was a chance for me to penetrate more deeply into the unexplored Nambikuara territory

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

622 and to meet groups too shy to venture forth on the outer fringe. The native band and my own group set out together on a journey supposed to be short; but, because of the animals I had taken, the chief had decided that the usual route through a dense forest could not be used. He led us through the open country, lost his way several times, and we did not reach our destination on the scheduled day. Supplies were exhausted and no game was in sight. The not unfamiliar prospect of a foodless day fell gloomily upon the natives. But, this time, it was the chief's responsibility. The whole project was his own, as well as the attempt to find an easier route. So, instead of trying to discover food, the hungry natives simply lay down in the shadow of the brush and waited for their leader to take them out of this most unpleasant situation. He did not wait or discuss; but, taking the incident as a matter of course, he simply left the camp accompanied by one of his wives. At the camp, the day was spent sleeping, gossiping and complaining. There was no lunch or dinner. But, late at dusk, the chief and his wife reappeared, both heavily laden with baskets filled to the brim. They had hunted grasshoppers the entire day, and, although the expression "to eat grasshoppers" has approximately the same meaning in Nambikuara as the French *manger de la vache enragée*,[6] this food was enthusiastically received, shared and consumed, amidst restored good humor. The following morning, everybody armed himself or herself with a leafless twig and went grasshopper-hunting.

[262]

622 595 I have several times referred to the chief's wives. Polygamy, which is practically the chief's privilege, brings him a moral and sentimental reward for his heavy duties together with the practical means of fulfilling them. In the Nambikuara band, apart from rare exceptions, only the chief and the sorcerer (when those functions are divided between two individuals) may have several wives. The chief's polygamy, however, presents special features. It does not constitute a plural marriage but rather a monogamous marriage to which relations of a different nature are added. I have already mentioned the fact that cross-cousin marriage is the usual pattern among the Nambikuara. Another type of marriage also exists, between a man and a woman belonging to the generation following his own, either a wife's "daughter" (true or classificatory) or a sister's niece. Both forms are not uncommon in South America and, together or separately, they have been re-

[6] Closest English equivalent: "to have a rough time of it, to go through the mill."

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

corded among many tribes. Now, what do we find in the chief's case? There is first a monogamous marriage of the cross-cousin type, that is, where the wife belongs to the same generation as her husband. This first wife plays the same part as the monogamous wife in ordinary marriages. She follows the sexual pattern of the division of labor, taking care of the children, doing the cooking, and collecting and gathering wild food. To this marriage are added one or several unions, which, technically, are true marriages, but of a different type. Usually, the secondary wives belong to a younger generation. The first wife calls them daughters or nieces. Besides, they do not follow the sexual pattern of the division of labor, but share indifferently in men's or women's activities. At the camp, they disdain domestic tasks and remain idle, either playing with the children to whose generation they belong or flirting with their husband, while the first wife keeps busy with the food and the fire. On the contrary, when the chief leaves on an exploration, a hunt, or some other manly task, they will accompany him and bring him their moral and physical help. These somewhat "tomboy" girls, elected by the chief from among the prettiest and healthiest of the group, are to him rather "girl-friends" than spouses. They live on the basis of an amorous friendship which contrasts strongly with the more conjugal atmosphere of the first marriage.

This system exerts a tremendous influence upon the whole life of the group. The periodical withdrawal by the chief of young women from the regular cycle of marriages creates a permanent unbalance within the group, between the number of boys and girls of marriageable age. Young men are the chief victims of that situation and must either remain bachelors for several years or marry widows or old women discarded by their husbands. Thus, the right to plural marriages represents a concession of considerable importance made by the group to its leader. What does it mean from the latter's point of view? There is little doubt that access to young and pretty girls brings him a much appreciated gratification, not so much from the physical side (as the Nambikwara share in the quiet dispositions of most South American tribes), as from the psychological and sentimental one. But, above all, plural marriage, together with its distinctive features, constitutes the technical means and the functional device placed at the chief's disposal by the group to enable him to carry out his exacting duties. Left by himself, he could hardly do more than the others. His secondary wives, freed by their special status from the customary

3: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939) 1944
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

622 595 182 abilities of their sex, are his helpers, comforters and assistants. They are, at the same time, leadership's prize and instrument. Can it be said, from the native point of view, that the prize is worth the trouble? To answer that question, I shall now have to consider the problem from a broader angle, namely, what does this elementary social structure, the Nambikuara band, teach us about leadership, its basis and its function?

121 There is a first point which does not require great elaboration. Nambikuara data contribute, with many others, to destroy the belief originated by early anthropologists, and temporarily revived by psychoanalysis, that the primitive chief could find his prototype in a symbolical father, and that the simpler forms of the State could progressively have grown out of the family. We have found at the root of the crudest forms of chieftainship a decisive step, which introduced something entirely new in respect to biological relations—and this step consists of *consent*. Consent, we have seen, is at the same time the origin and the limit of leadership. Unilateral relations such as right of age, autocratic power, or others, may appear in groups having an already complex structure. In simple forms of social organization, such as the one I have tried to describe, they are inconceivable. Here, on the contrary, the relationship between the chief and the group can be seen as a perpetual process of arbitration where the chief's talents and authority on the one hand and the group's size, cohesion and willingness, on the other, constantly react on and influence each other. If I had the time, and if it were not so far removed from my topic, I would have liked to show what considerable support modern anthropological observations bring, in this respect, to the analysis of the eighteenth century social philosophers. I am well aware of the fact that Rousseau's "social contract," which is the step by which individuals resign their autonomy in favor of the General Will, is entirely different from the nearly contractual relations existing between the chief and his followers. It remains true, however, that Rousseau and his contemporaries displayed a keen sociological feeling when they understood that cultural attitudes and elements such as "contract" and "consent" are not the result of secondary processes, as claimed by their opponents; they are culture's raw materials, and it is impossible to conceive a political or social organization in which they would not already be present. If I understand correctly, the recent analysis, by modern American

missaries had not yet learned enough Iranxe to make working with informants possible.

As all of the following information, unless otherwise specified, relates to the Wakitáun band, a short description of this band is in order. Today the band consists of 18 individuals, of which Julio is the chief. About 5 years ago, before a measles epidemic decimated it, the band was roughly twice the size it is today. Julio is a man of middle age, has three wives and two children, and probably holds his leadership by being the strongest and ablest man in the band. Except for one of Julio's wives and her daughter who are Eléteare, the members of the band are Wakitáun and related to one another. Julio took the Eléteare woman from the Eléteare band by killing her husband. He claims he did this because the Eléteare chief stole one of his wives some years ago. He claims he is going to steal another wife, for every chief is supposed to have four. Only three other men, Martín, Mariano, and Joaquín, are married, each having one wife. The remaining four are either widowers or as yet unmarried.

Of all the Indians which I have visited in Mato Grosso the members of this band of Nambicuara were the most miserable. Of the eight men, one had syphilis, another had some kind of infection in his side, another had an injured foot, another was covered with some kind of scaly skin disease from head to foot, and another was deaf and dumb. The women and children, however, appeared to be healthy. Owing to the fact that they use no hammocks but sleep on the ground, they are always covered with dirt. On cold nights they remove the fleas and sleep in the warm ashes. The Wakitáun wear clothes only when they are given by the missionaries, who ask that they be worn. Their distaste for bathing permits not only a covering of dust and ashes to accumulate on their skin and hair but also particles of decayed meat and fish, which, combined with stale sweat, makes proximity to them rather distasteful. They also appear to be heavily infected with internal parasites, for their stomaches are distended and they are continually passing wind. On several occasions when a number of them had crowded into the small room we used for working we had to cease work in order to air the room.

In their manners the Nambicuara also contrast sharply with the other tribes I visited. The

4: Oberg E-5 (1949) 1953
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

GH 773

to grow maize and sweet potatoes. He also gave them the flute (sabarbe), and taught them how to sing and dance. Childbirth is thus the culture hero of the Nambicuara. In human form he looks like a Nambicuara Indian, wears ornaments in his ears, nose, and upper lip and paints himself with urucú. Yet today people no longer see childbirth, for he has gone away. They do not have rituals connected with him, nor do the shamans exhibit his aid. But the stone mountain from which the Nambicuara came is still recognized as the place of the dead. On ceremonial occasions the ghosts of the ancestors come to the encampments and villages from the mountain, returning after they have been given food.

●622 Although every band has a leader or chief it is not quite certain whether these leaders get their positions through succession or by personal strength and prestige. Julio claimed that he is headman because his father was a headman, but the other members of the Wakitáire band claim that the strongest man is always the leader by common agreement. The Nambicuara appear to value two qualities in a man—"a strong body" and "a strong mouth." The chief is like a tapir (aldeare) which is the strongest of the animals; thus, a chief is called alexatidesare. A shaman gains power by talking or by having "a strong mouth," as the Nambicuara say. The strongest man is one who combines these qualities and is at once a strong man and shaman—he becomes an important chief.

The survival of the band, the Nambicuara believe, depends upon the alexatidesare. He is the band leader, the band farmer, the one who organizes trade between the bands, the ceremonial head, the war leader, and the settler of disputes. Every successful chief is supposed to have four wives but otherwise has nothing to distinguish him from the rest of the tribesmen.

619 Relationships between the bands of the Eastern Nambicuara are characterized by intermarriage, trade, occasional joint ceremonies, and wife stealing and consequent armed conflicts. Intermarriage occurs when cross cousins are not available for marriage within the band. The Chiwtáire and Higaídon obtain pots from the Western Nambicuara in exchange for war, feather ornaments, beads, and bows and arrows. These pots they in turn exchange with the Eastern Nambicuara bands for knives, axes, and tin cans.

[582] 438 619

When one band wants to meet another in order to exchange goods the approach is made in a very formal manner. The approaching band stops

[p. 96(B)]

621 Eitsaw band. This is the custom among all the Eastern Nambicuara bands.

601 The kinship terminology belongs to the bifurcate merging type. The term tapaisaw (grandfather) and the term pantakitsiw (grandmother) are extended to the brothers and sisters of one's grandparents. The term eatsaiw (father) and the term ekakisaiw (mother) are extended to father's brother and mother's sister, respectively. Father's sister is termed ekatsaiwa and mother's brother eatsaiwa. A man calls his elder brother ekandwaiw, his younger brother dandidaiw, and his sisters eandaiwa, these terms being extended to parallel cousins. The terms for son (ekiwdu) and daughter (ekwaiw) are extended to the children of a man whom ego calls brother. The terms for sister's son and daughter are awaiw and aitsiw, respectively, these terms being extended to the children of anyone whom ego calls sister. The term for male cross cousin is awiwa and that for female cross cousin, dandu. There is just one term for grandchildren, pantadiwawa.

The only affinal kinship terms which we could obtain were the terms wife (eaiw) which bears a close relationship to female cross cousin; husband (awandiw); and the terms for father-in-law (aetsawa), and mother-in-law (ekatsawa), which are identical to the terms for mother's brother and father's sister. Whether women employ different kinship terms was not ascertained owing to the fact that the women refused to discuss the matter and the male informants persisted in going to sleep when the subject was broached.

532 The kinship terminology supports the statement made by the Nambicuara that cross-cousin marriage is preferred. Excepting one Eitsaw woman all the wives in Julio's band were Wakihiru and cross cousins of their husbands. At the death of

587 the husband the wife and children pass to the
708 deceased husband's brother. Women sometimes marry their mother's brothers. Residence is patri-

591 local although when marrying a woman from another band, the man sometimes remains with his wife's band for a while. Band membership, as has been stated, is determined by matrilineal descent.

● 622 The powers of the chief are limited to leadership in such activities as hunting, planting, trade, and ceremonies. Bands, although organized by the chief, are not led by him. The chief admon-

[p. 99(A)]

The chief advises
627 [623] ishes quarrelsome individuals but appears to have no powers of coercion. The Wakitáun claim that individuals quarrel but they do not fight among themselves nor do they remember any cases of murder. Unwanted individuals are exiled by common agreement. Houses, fields, and some implements are common property, and food is shared among the members of the band. Axes, machetes, and knives, although owned by individuals are freely used by other members. At death, privately owned tools pass to a man's sons or to his brother. The bow is customarily broken and left on the grave. Even these rules are not strictly adhered to, for when a man becomes seriously ill other men begin to help themselves to his property and the one with the "strongest mouth" gets the most. If the man recovers he cannot reclaim his things but must set about accumulating a new supply.

The wife and the children are under the strict control of the husband. Although boys must obey their fathers they owe no special obedience to their mothers. Boys sometimes throw stones and sticks at their mothers and the old women; the older men not only laugh but even encourage this disobedience. The bond between brothers is very close. On occasion they share each other's wives. No particular respect is paid to in-laws.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

According to the Wakitáun the spirits are the source of all danger, misfortune, sickness, and death. The ghosts of the dead (*epitehúlou*), bring sickness unless offerings of food are made to them. The ghosts of dead shamans (*owáwa*), belonging to other bands bring thunderstorms which destroy gardens and make hunting difficult. In addition to the ghosts, there is *tsupté*, the hawk of death who lives in the sky, and *wáwi*, the evil armadillo who lives under the ground and wants to destroy the villages and camps of the Nambicuara.

Tsupté is an enormous hawk with huge wings, tail, and claws, who sits in a tree made of human bones. This tree (*hálukutsu*) is situated on the shore of a shallow lake in the sky. Shooting stars are caused by *tsupté* defecating at night. A small red bird (*dindiwasu*), who lives with *tsupté*, urinates into the lake and when it fills up the urine overflows and comes down in the form of rain.

[p. 99(a)]

854 Children are treated with great affection and refused nothing. They are rarely punished. Many an Indian, already elderly would walk for leagues [256] with a child on his back to come to us and give the little one some of the presents we were distributing.

622 They have no clearly defined chiefs. Some men the muleteers call chiefs are merely individuals of some influence frequently heeded by the others.

578 622 One day, in Campos Novos, we were visited by the Cocozu and Anunze. Several young men of both groups spent the night there: Nuleke, Krikricekmerá (Manduca), Paixão, Preguiça [Port. "sloth], Damasceno, and the famous Cavagnac, supposed chief of the Urutau village, a scoundrel who used to ambush the muleteers on the Line and take their packs.

On the following day many Uaintaçu came; they were bold, rough, and quite unpleasant people.

The others, when they saw the Uiantaçu approaching, gave signs of agitation. Finally the Uaintaçu arrived, very much excited by the presence of our guests. An endless discussion ensued among the three groups. They all talked and gesticulated in angry fashion, with gleaming eyes, ready to attack each other. Fearing a conflict which would be disastrous on every count, we intervened by distributing cigarettes, matches, axes, etc., in order to distract them. They calmed down. But some of the Cocozu and Uaintaçu boys continued to argue and were gradually surrounded by the others who listened attentively. Two on one side would speak; two from the other side would reply. The two Indians who talked, Damasceno and Cavagnac, were more intelligent, clever and bold. There was nothing to indicate that they were true chiefs, recognized as such on every occasion. They were temporary chiefs.

622 Among the Tagnani and Tawite, on the other hand, there are clearly defined secular chiefs. One of them stood out because he wore no ornaments whatever [257]. He actually commanded and was obeyed by all. He had three wives.

562 The status of the Nambicuara woman is not so degraded as that of other Brazilian Indian women. She works hard, it is true. She [62] gathers fruit, grates manioc, handles the mortar and pestle, erects the hunting shelters, spins cotton, carries the family belongings, cares for the children, takes part in cultivating the plot; but usually she is